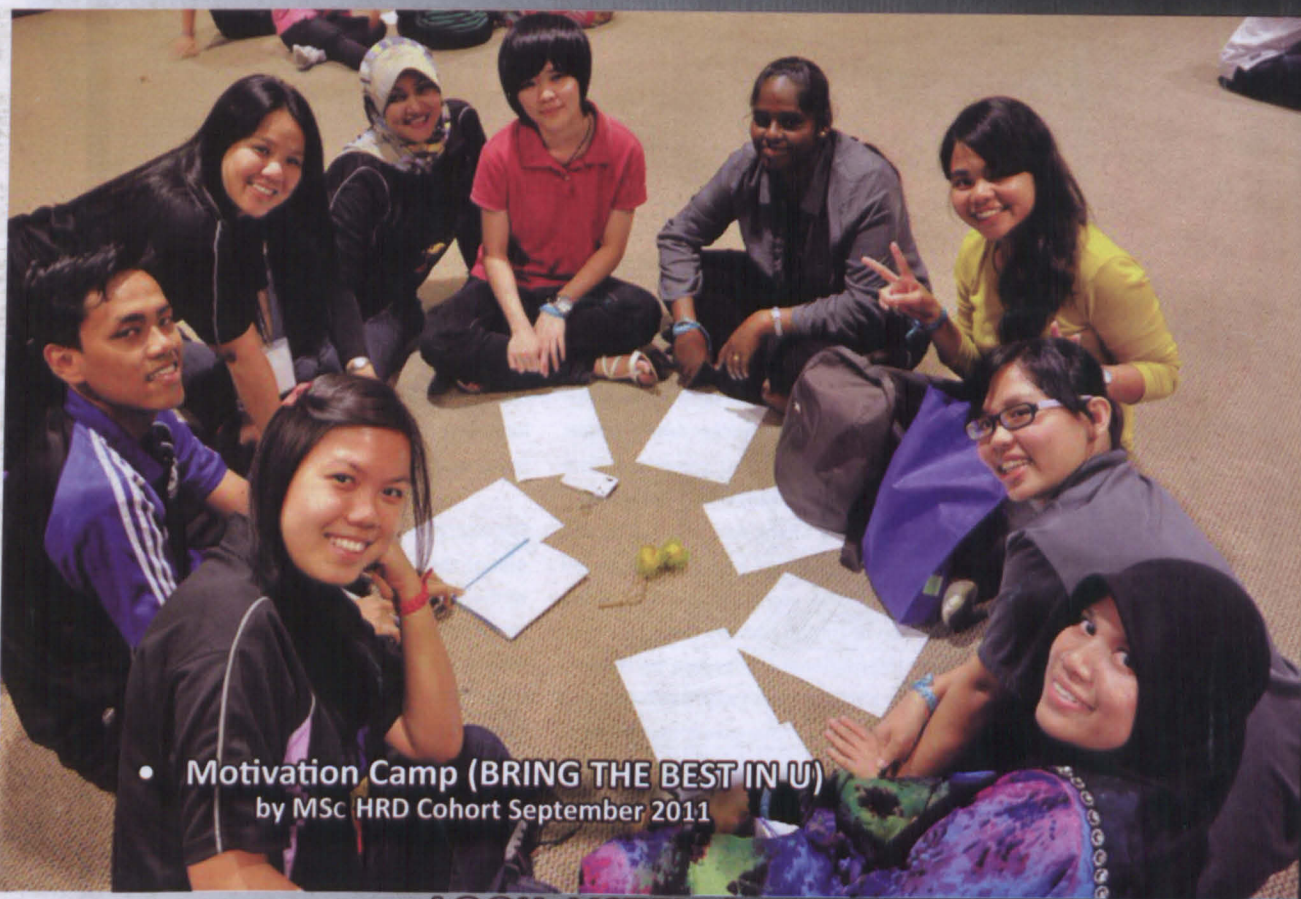


WARTA PASCA

postgraduate newsletter



7th EDITION



- Motivation Camp (BRING THE BEST IN U)
by MSc HRD Cohort September 2011

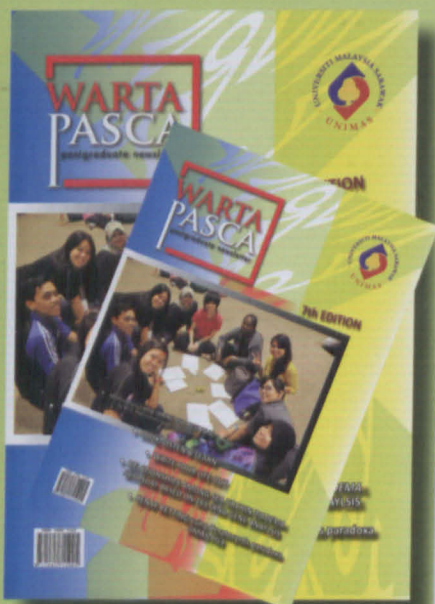
• LOOK, LISTEN & LEARN

• WRITE YOUR LIFE OUT

• RELATIONSHIPS AMONG SEA URCHIN *DIADEMA SETOSUM* BASED ON 16S rRNA GENE ANALYSIS

• KENAF RETTING using *Ceratocystis paradoxa*
UMAS-PG3

LG
K 63
W 296
Uni
No. 7
2013



EDITORIAL BOARD

ADVISORS

Dato' Prof Dr Mohamad Kadim bin Suaidi
Prof Dr Fatimah Abang

CHIEF EDITOR

Prof Dr Ernest Cyril De Run

EDITORS

Prof Dr Khairul Aidil Azlin Abdul Rahman
Assoc Prof Dr Alvin Yeo Wee
Dr Wan Azlan Wan Zainal Abidin
Azlan Ramli
Dayang Mazina Awg Batu
Winnie Vincent

GRAPHIC DESIGNERS

Adeline Ann Lubi

PHOTO BY

Ritche Diman
Personal Contributors

COVER DESIGN

Adeline Ann Lubi

WARTA PASCA welcomes feedback.
Please contact WARTA PASCA at:

Email: cgsc@pps.unimas.my

Tel: +608 258 2488

Fax: +608 258 2454

ISSN 1985-7152



Published as news bulletin by the Centre for Graduate Studies (CGS), UNIMAS. Copyright © 2013 UNIMAS. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced or distributed in any form or by any means, or stored in a data base or retrieval system, without permission from CGS, UNIMAS.

WELCOME TO THE SEVENTH ISSUE OF WARTAPASCA

DEAN'S MESSAGE

Salam Sejahtera and Salam Perpaduan, to colleagues, graduate students and all who happen to read our Warta Pasca.

On behalf of the team at the Centre for Graduate Studies (CGS), I would like to welcome all new graduate students to Universiti of Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). I enjoyed meeting many of our new students at the Welcoming New Graduate Student Intake Orientation last September 2012 and February 2013 this year. Graduate school is a place of extraordinary opportunities and growth. It is the place where you move from being a student to a researcher, writer, and teacher. You begin your graduate program by asking questions and you will leave with answers and perhaps even more questions. Graduate school is where your professors become your colleagues and your co-authors. It is an exciting time of your life and I welcome you to UNIMAS with great enthusiasm. For returning students, many of whom have been hard at work on campus, we send our best wishes for a productive academic year.

This issue highlights our graduate students' achievement in conferences and poster presentation contest. A PhD candidate from Faculty of Resource Science and Technology, UNIMAS, Lim Hong Chang was selected as one of the recipient of travel award and received US\$1000 from ISSHA and Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) to attend The 15th International Conference on Harmful Algae (15th ICHA) at Changwon Exhibition and Convention Centre, Changwon Gyeongnam, Korea from October 29 to November 2, 2012. Peter Chong Kian Fui, Master degree research student of Assoc. Prof Dr Andrew Wong, Faculty of Resource Science and Technology, won the coveted Ron Cockcroft Award from the International Research Group on Wood Protection to enable him to participate at the 43rd Annual Conference of The International



Research Group on Wood Protection (IRGWP), Kuala Lumpur, and 6 – 10 May 2012. Other students also did very well in conferences and poster presentations. Do have a read in this Warta Pasca.

On a scholarship side, the interview for scholarships has been successfully carried out by CGS on 5th February 2013 and 44 students were awarded scholarships. As scholarships are limited in number, the award itself mirrored the student's ability to comprehend their project in the eye of the panel members. There will sadly be always some cases where students failed to obtain a scholarship from us. This by no means reflect the inferior nature of the project, only that CGS have to concede to a certain number of successful applicants in each interview, based on the remaining amount of funds available.

The next issue of WartaPasca will focus more on one of the most exciting and important event of the year, Graduation or Convocation Day on this coming November 2013. Graduate students who intend to submit their thesis or doing their final corrections should really double their effort and focus on their work, if they are to join this year's batch on Convocation Day. I wish you all the best.

Thank You.

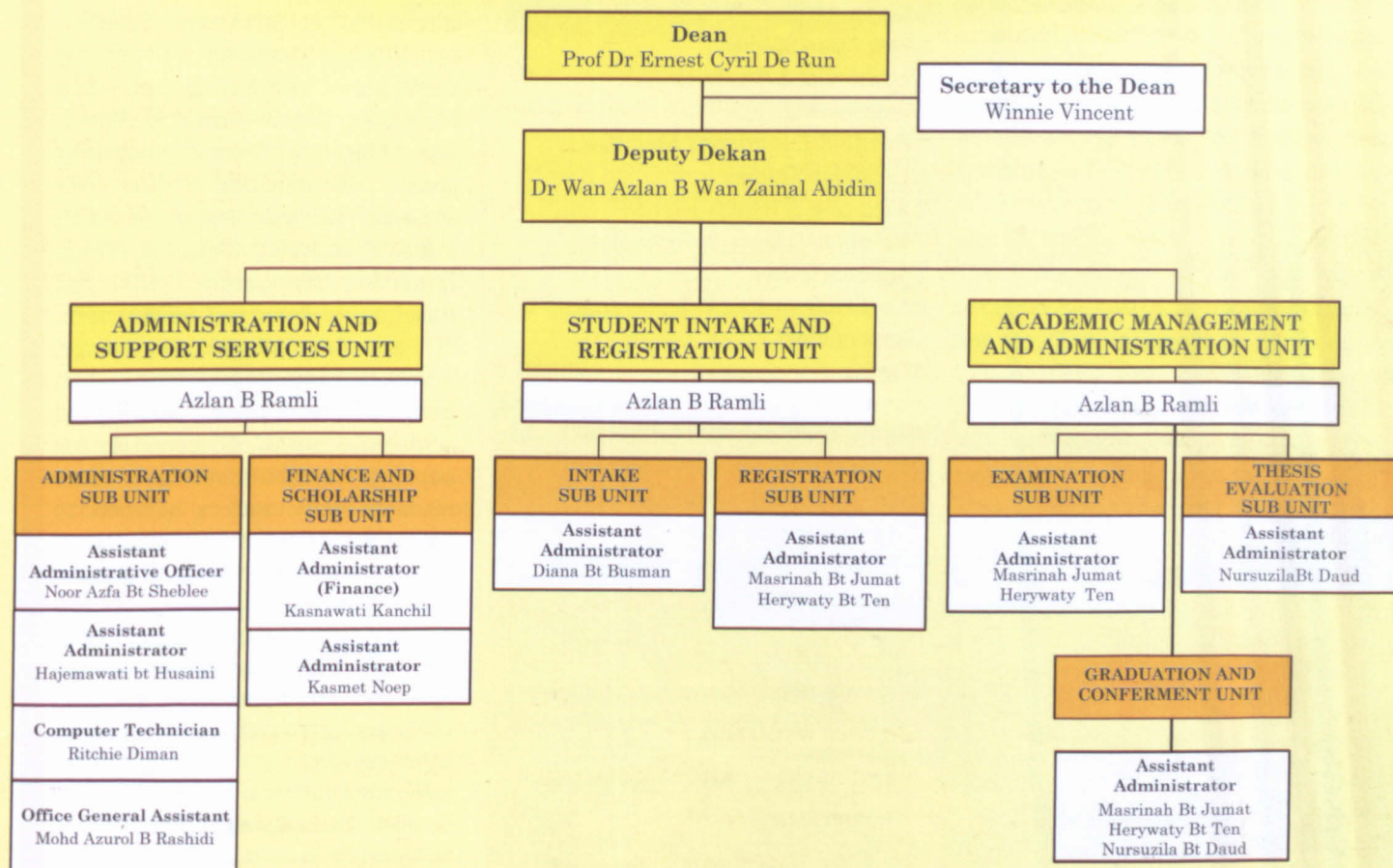
Prof Dr Ernest Cyril De Run
Dean, Centre for Graduate Studies

CONTENTS

- | | | | |
|----|--|----|---------------------------------------|
| 02 | WELCOME | 08 | MOTIVATION CAMP (BRING THE BEST IN U) |
| 03 | THE PEOPLE BEHIND CGS (2013 - Mac 2012) | 09 | CONFERENCE'S REPORT |
| 04 | WHAT WE OFFERED | 10 | SLUSE-M |
| 06 | RELATIONSHIPS AMONG SEA URCHIN DIADEMA SETOSUM BASED ON 16S rRNA GENE ANALYSIS | 12 | LOOK, LISTEN & LEARN |
| 07 | KENAF RETTING using Ceratocystis paradoxa UMAS-PG3 | 14 | WRITE YOUR LIFE OUT |
| 08 | LIM HONG CHANG @15th ICHA 2012, KOREA | 15 | STAFF CORNER |
| | | 16 | CGS SNAPSHOTS |



THE PEOPLE BEHIND CGS



What We Offer

GRADUATE STUDENTS choose Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) for its comprehensive range of coursework and research degrees, expert faculty as well as its competitive and affordable fees. UNIMAS is one of only three public universities in East Malaysia, and Sarawak offers huge opportunities for field based studies amongst its varied ethnic community and abundant flora and fauna. Since its establishment in 2003, the Centre for Graduate Studies (CGS) has held the distinction of being contemporary and forward looking in its approach to provide the best possible access to education and training for UNIMAS students.

In choosing a university to pursue a postgraduate programme, one has to weigh out many options. Will there be adequate facilities, state-of-the-art laboratories and equipment, modern library, computing facilities and experienced faculty – that can contribute and to promote the creation of a conducive research culture and learning experience? Will there be a sufficient pool of academic staff and researchers who are inspirational and committed to the pursuits and advancement of new knowledge and its applications? Will your experience as a UNIMAS graduate student be challenging, fulfilling and rewarding, socially and intellectually? Indeed in building the foundation for credibility and excellence of our graduate programmes, we have given our fullest attention to these critical criteria.

We take pride in our high-caliber staff and skilled researchers, our modern research facilities and campus-wide computer networking and services and our high level of commitment to research in a broad coverage of areas. UNIMAS offers the rare prospect of focusing on quality and assertively seeking for a culture of excellence.

Graduate teaching and research have always occupied the highest profile in all its endeavors and achievements. The graduate programmes and research are constantly reviewed and monitored to maintain a learning environment of the highest quality.

The course lineup also emphasizes on areas of environmental and social relevance to the community of East Malaysia. Most programmes are research-based, but there also several coursework degrees. The major research programmes are biotechnology, IT, engineering, economics and business.

POSTGRADUATE PROGRAMMES

Postgraduate Degrees by Research (Doctor of Philosophy and Masters)

Fields of study:

- ☑ Applied & Creative Arts
- ☑ Biodiversity & Environmental Conservation
- ☑ Cognitive Sciences & Human Development
- ☑ Computer Science & IT
- ☑ East Asian Studies
- ☑ Economics & Business
- ☑ Engineering
- ☑ Health & Community Medicine
- ☑ Language Studies
- ☑ Medicine & Health Science
- ☑ Resource Science & Technology
- ☑ Social Sciences
- ☑ Social Informatics & Technological Innovations
- ☑ Design & Innovation

Postgraduate Degrees by Coursework (Masters)

- ☑ Corporate Master of Business Administration (CMBA)
- ☑ Master of Advanced Information Technology (MAIT)
- ☑ Master of Environmental Management (Development Planning)
- ☑ Master of Environmental Science (Land Use & Water Resource Management)
- ☑ Master of Science in Human Resource Development (HRD)
- ☑ Master of Public Health (MPH)
- ☑ Master of Engineering (Civil)
- ☑ Master of Science (Learning Sciences)
- ☑ Doctor of Public Health (Dr PH)

Peter Chong wins prestigious Ron Cockcroft Award (RCA)

Peter Chong Kian Fui, Master degree research student of Assoc. Prof Dr Andrew Wong, Faculty of Resource Science and Technology, won the coveted Ron Cockcroft Award from the International Research Group on Wood Protection (www.irgwp.org) to enable him to participate at the 43rd Annual Conference of The International Research Group on Wood Protection (IRGWP), Kuala Lumpur, 6-10 May 2012, where he made a joint presentation with Dr Wong, of a scientific paper entitled "Influence of soil moisture, Sarawak soil types and decay types on decay susceptibility of rubberwood and kelempayan", and a poster entitled "CCA leaching from treated wood buried in five Sarawak soil types", topics concerning wood protection and wood durability. The conference was jointly organized by the IRGWP (secretariat at Stockholm, Sweden) and the Malaysian Organising Committee comprising of The Malaysian Timber Industry Board, The Ministry of Primary Industries and Commodities, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Forest Research Institute Malaysia, Malaysian Wood Preserving Association. With this travel award Peter had his first taste of an international conference, which greatly benefited him because as he recalled, "...during the conference period, I listened to the paper presenters speaking on their research work and in addition to having gained some knowledge from them, I also learned ways to prepare good presentation slides and how to present the research data." Peter also felt that "the conference also gave me the opportunity to meet other young RCA recipients, sponsors, other researchers and scientists from different countries i.e. Japan, Korea, Sweden, Australia and China. The IRG conference was thus most exciting scientific meeting and I do hope in future I may be able to attend such conferences."

Peter is most grateful to the IRGWP for the RCA, which greatly motivated his pursuance of his MSc research in wood biodeterioration and wood protection. "I am most grateful to my primary supervisor Associate Professor Dr Andrew Wong, for encouraging me to apply for the RCA as well as providing close supervision to my Master degree research project" as Peter expresses. He is also indebted to Mr John Sabang (Sarawak Forestry Corporation), a soil scientist, who also provided much help involving soil quality/type characterization that affects the wood durability.

The International Research Group on Wood Protection (until 10 June 2004 The International Research Group on Wood Preservation) was launched as an independent research group in 1969 to continue the work of a previous group of experts on wood preservation that had been set up, following an Austrian proposal in 1965, by the Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), in Paris, France. Since 1979, the Group's Secretariat is based at Stockholm, Sweden. The IRGWP has a global membership of more than 300 members (mainly scientists and commercialists) from 50 countries. Almost all the world's recognized wood protection scientists attend the annual IRG conferences held in different countries to present their first results in the field which are published by the IRGWP as proceedings. Thus this international conference on wood protection research is prestigious in the field of wood protection. The IRGWP's emphasis in wood protection research is to ensure protection of wood-based materials from biodeterioration and accompanying economic losses, so that these materials can be used efficiently. Also the IRGWP is concerned that the technology today has a role in conserving the world's forest resources, since wood is one of mankind's only naturally renewable resources. More extensive use of the wood protection technology and its innovations can help alleviate threats to global forest depletions, and also may help mitigate climate change.



at conference dinner



making oral presentation

The Ron Cockcroft Award (RCA) is a merit-based travel award programme, administered by The International Research Group on Wood Protection (www.irgwp.org), to promote international awareness of developments in research in wood protection. The RCA is named in recognition of Ron Cockcroft (diseased), an eminent British wood protection scientist who, as a founding member of the IRGWP in 1969, contributed much to the development and growth of this research group. The prestigious international award provides financial assistance towards travel and accommodation costs to the award winners, enabling them to participate at an Annual International Research Group on Wood Protection (IRGWP) Conference held in different countries each year. The RCA is intended primarily to assist graduate research students and active young scientists, who, for financial reasons might otherwise be unable to attend an IRG conference, and opened also to non-members of the IRGWP. RCA recipients receive a diploma from the IRG President during the opening ceremony as an evidence of the award.

The Award comprises support for travel, accommodation and meal costs to the recipient after the conference, and additionally all registration and attendance fees as well as submitted research papers are complimentary to the recipient. The recipients of an award are expected to present their work in wood durability and/or wood protection at the IRG Conference and to participate throughout the whole conference. Peter Chong was indeed the third Malaysian to win the RCA. In 1990, Dr Andrew Wong (then of Forest Research Institute Malaysia) was the first Malaysian to receive the inaugural RCA to present his findings at the IRG Conference in New Zealand, while in 2006 Malaysian wood protection research witnessed yet another Unimas Master degree student of Dr Wong, Mr Lai Huat Choi receiving the RCA to present findings at the IRG conference in Norway. As its young/graduate researchers gained recognition from abroad, thanks in this case to the IRGWP, indeed Unimas is among the leading academic institutions for wood protection research in the tropics.



Relationships among Sea Urchin *Diadema setosum* based on 16S rRNA gene analysis

Nursyuhaida MD SHAHID* and Ruhana HASSAN

Aquatic science Department, Faculty of Resource Science and Technology, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, 94300 Kota Samarahan Sarawak

*Email: ms.syuhaida@gmail.com



INTRODUCTION

D.setosum or known as the long spine black sea urchin is one of the most abundant sea urchin species found in Sabah waters. This species shaped the benthic communities through its feeding habit and play a huge role as the keystone species in balancing the food chain relationship. *D.setosum* from four locations in Sabah have been utilized to observe the genetic variation among individuals and variation between populations. Phylogenetic relationship study can further determine their likely mode of formation in the sea in which the information can be used for conservation and sustainable management purpose.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

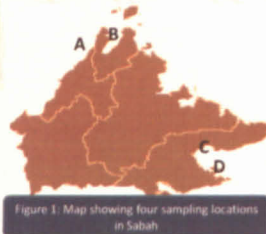


Figure 1: Map showing four sampling locations in Sabah

Sample Collection
A- Mantanani Island
B-Kudat
C-Lahad Datu
D-Larapan Tengah

Total Genomic DNA
Extraction using
Modified CTAB
Protocol by Doyle &
Doyle (1987)

Amplification of 16S
rRNA gene &
Sequencing analysis

Data Analysis
✓ Genetic Distance
Analysis
✓ Phylogenetic Analysis
✓ Network Analysis

Table 1: Genetic Distance (X100) in percentage among samples of the same populations and samples between populations based on Kimura 2 Parameter model (Kimura, 1980)

	A	B	C	D
A) Mantanani Island	0%	-		
B) Kudat	0 - 0.6%	0 - 0.6%	-	
C) Lahad Datu	0%	0 - 0.6%	-	-
D) Larapan Tengah	0.2 - 0.8%	0 - 0.8%	0.2 - 0.8%	0.2 - 1.0%

RESULT & DISCUSSION

A total of 26 *D.setosum* 16S rRNA gene sequences have been utilized to assess the relationships among the samples. Based on Table 1, genetic distance values recorded among samples of the same locations and between locations was below 2% which suggest intraspecific variation and close relationships among *D.setosum* individuals.

Phylogenetic tree (Figure 2) showed *D.setosum* is monophyletic. Two clades can be observed in which Clade I includes samples from Mantanani Island and Lahad Datu while Clade II comprised Kudat and Larapan Tengah samples.

Based on Figure 3, eight haplotypes (H_1 to H_8) were generated in which all Mantanani Island samples and one samples from Lahad Datu and Kudat forming one haplotype (H_3) while some Kudat samples and Larapan Tengah samples forming another haplotypes. Sharing of H_3 among all populations indicates close relationship of *D.setosum* samples involved in this study.

The close relationships among the samples of different populations indicates the occurrence of gene flow in Sabah waters for this sea urchin species. High dispersal potential of the planktonic larvae which can remain in that phase for 6 weeks (Lessios et al., 2001) allows movement of the larvae through the water current which then influence the geographic distribution and their population structure. Accidental transport by ballast water may also relate to the occurrence of gene flow and close relationship among *D.setosum* samples.

NETWORK ANALYSIS

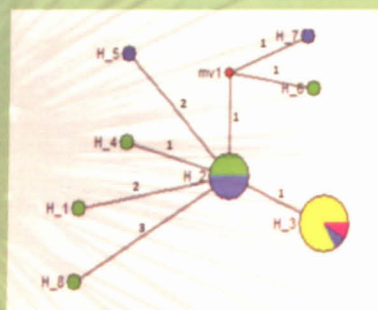


Figure 3: Minimum-spanning network (MSN) generated by Network 4.6.10 (Bandelt et al., 1999) illustrating the relationships of *D.setosum* in Sabah waters.

Each circle represents a haplotype and the diameter scales to haplotype frequency. Yellow circle indicates Mantanani haplotypes, Green circles indicates Larapan Tengah haplotypes, Blue circles indicates Kudat haplotypes and Pink indicates Lahad Datu haplotype.

Red circle indicate missing haplotype and bold number on the line connecting haplotypes indicate number of mutational steps.

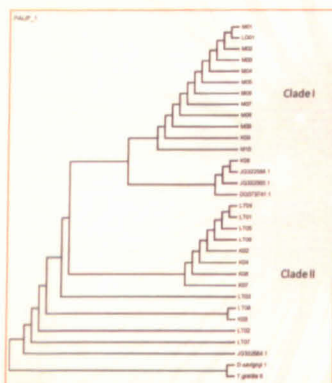


Figure 2: Neighbour-joining tree constructed using Kimura 2 Parameter genetic distance model for 16S rRNA gene of *Diadema setosum* from Sabah. *Diadema savignyi* and *Tringostus griffithi* were used as outgroup.

✓ M01 to M10 indicates Mantanani Island samples, L01 indicate Lahad Datu sample, K02 to K09 indicates Kudat samples and L02 to L08 indicate Larapan Tengah samples.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We would like to thank Dr. Siti Akmar Khadijah and Mr.Raymie Nurhassan for their help in collecting the sea urchin samples as well as sharing opinion and ideas related to this project. This project is partly funded FRGS/07(02)/759/2010(45) awarded to Dr. Siti Akmar Khadijah. The first author is the recipient of Zamalah Penyelidikan Naib Canselor (ZPNC) 2011 .

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATION

Close relationships among *D.setosum* samples from Sabah have been determined based on 16S rRNA gene sequence analysis. Gene flow occurred between populations, probably due to high dispersal ability of the long-lived planktonic larvae. Data obtained in this study could further support sustainable management of *D.setosum* in Sabah.

REFERENCES

- Bandelt, H.J., Forster, P & Rohl, A. (1999). Median-joining networks for inferring intraspecific phylogenies. *Molecular Biology and Evolution*, 16, 37-48.
- Doyle, J.J., & Doyle, J.L. (1987). A rapid DNA isolation procedure from small quantities of fresh leaf tissue. *Phytochemical Bulletin*, 19, 11-15.
- Kimura, M. (1980). Kimura's two-parameter model of Models of DNA Evolution. In J. Felsenstein (2004.). *Inferring Phylogenies*. Sunderland, Massachusetts: Sinauer Associates, Inc.
- Lessios, H.A., Kessing, B.D., & Pearse, J.S. (2001). Population structure and speciation in tropical seas: global phylogeography of the sea urchin *Diadema*. *Evolution*, 55, 955-975.

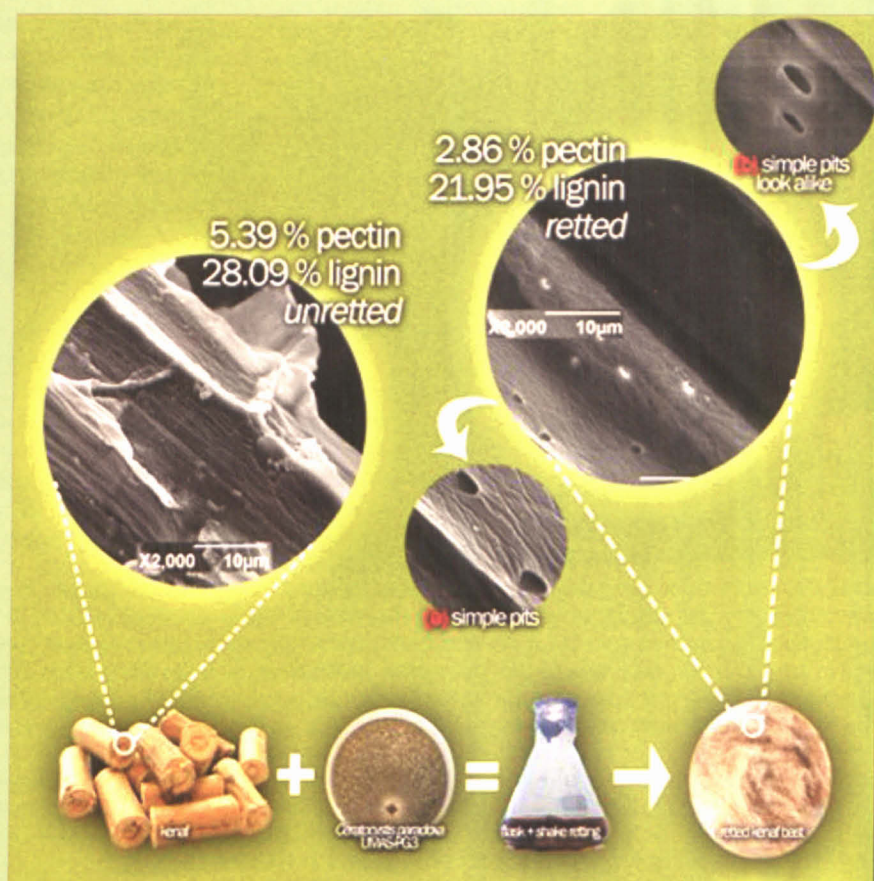
46.90% pectin
removed

21.95% lignin
removed

Even shape and size of simple pits (a) observed via SEM indicate lignin, pectin and other polysaccharides in middle lamellae most likely were removed during retting.

Irregular size and shape of pits look alike (b) observed most probably indicates the results of hyphae attack during retting which might cause cellulose degradation.

Kenaf retting should be further optimized under various parameters to achieve better retting degree.



The 4th Regional Conference on Natural Resources in the Tropics
(Ntrop4)" di DeTar PUTRA UNIMAS
pada 19 – 21 September 2012

KENAF RETTING

Using *Ceratocystis paradoxa* UMAS-PG3

Dayang Syahreeny A. M.¹, Awang Ahmad Sallehin A. H.¹, Hairul Azman R.¹ and Ismail J.²
¹Department of Molecular Biology, ²Department of Plant Science and Environmental Ecology,
Faculty of Resource Science & Technology,
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Kota Samarahan.
Email: dyg.syahreeny@gmail.com



KENAF Annual plant and member of the hibiscus family. It is considered renewable as it grows quickly providing high production yields, with both core and bast being usable.

RETTING The process of separation and extraction of fibers from non-fibrous tissues and woody part of the stem through separation, dissolution and decomposition of pectins, gums and other mucilaginous substances.

Poster Presentation "The 4th Regional Conference on Natural Resources in the Tropics (Ntrop4)" di DeTar PUTRA UNIMAS
19 - 21 September 2012

PROSPECTS Annual plant and member of the hibiscus family. It is considered renewable as it grows quickly providing high production yields, with both core and bast being usable.

Thanks to Lembaga Kenaf dan Tembakau Negara, Kelantan for generous supply of kenaf



The 15th International Conference on Harmful Algae (15th ICHA) was held recently at CECO (Changwon Exhibition and Convention Centre) Changwon Gyeongnam, Korea from OCT 29 to Nov 2, 2012. The biennial event was jointly organized by International Society for the Study of Harmful Algae (ISSHA) and Korean Ocean Research and Development Institute (KORDI). The event in Korea attracted more than 500 international participants to meet and discuss their recent finding in harmful algal blooms (HABs) researches.

PhD candidate from Faculty of Resource Science and Technology, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS), Lim Hong Chang was selected as one of the recipient of travel award to this conference. He received US\$1000 from ISSHA and Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations (FAO) to cover his registration fee and travel expenses to attend the conference. His accommodation during the conference was also supported by Gyeongnam Provincial Government.

**Lim Hong Chang -
recipient of travel award to 15th ICHA and
received US\$1000**

During the conference, he gave an oral presentation entitled "Morphology and phylogeny of a new species of *Pseudo-nitzschia* from Malaysia". This is part of his PhD study supervised by Dr Lim Po Teen and Dr Leaw Chui Pin. He is glad with the support from ISSHA, he has the opportunity to meet up with HABs researchers from all continents sharing the same research interests. He also had the opportunity to discuss some collaborative researches with Dr Nina Lundholm, an associate Professor at Copenhagen University, whom is the authority in taxonomy study of diatom *Pseudo-nitzschia*. Two joint papers are expected to be submitted for publication before end of this year as outcome of the discussion.

Hong Chang obtained his Bachelor degree in Aquatic Resource Science and Management and Master in Marine Science from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS). He is currently focused on the occurrence, seasonal distribution to population dynamic, systematic and genetic diversity of amnesic shellfish toxin producing marine diatom, *Pseudo-nitzschia* species in Malaysia. Hong Chang is expected to complete his Ph.D. study at UNIMAS by 2013.

Motivation Camp (BRING THE BEST IN U) By MSc HRD Cohort September 2011

by Surena Sabil
MSc HRD
Programme Coordinator

As part of the class activity in Design and Management of Training Program Course, we have conducted a one day training program for the new undergraduate students. One day training (Motivation Program) was done on 1st December 2012 through collaboration between MSc HRD Cohort September 2011 and Student Development Centre, UNIMAS. The first year students which selected based on randomly basis from 6 faculties (FSKPM, FSS, FSTS, FSGK, FEB, FSKTM) involved in this particular program.

Hence, this motivation program was develop with the hope to help them in adjusting to the new life and suggests strategies to help them succeed in dealing with challenging campus life. It was also intended to provide tips on managing new responsibilities and to encourage them in becoming more confident and independent individuals.

Entering the university is another big transition to every new student. As they are about to go through a major life change, it is crucial to prepare themselves to not only to adjust to a new life, adapting into a new education climate and learning environment but also to get them ready in facing new challenges and meeting exciting new people. Entering the campus life is a transition where the new students may need to adapt new way of thinking and working in order to achieve success as the expectations will be more higher and the more complex. The responsibility to craft their own future depends much on their readiness in assuming new roles in higher learning institution. One key of success is being able to anticipate the challenges ahead and being well-prepared to encounter them.



Report on Attending Conference

Participant Name

Shirly Siew-Ling Wong (shirlywong87@hotmail.com)

Lee-Chea Hiew (irene_hiewlc@yahoo.com)

Alvina Syn-YeeLee (alvina1101@hotmail.com)

Jenny LijooYong (jenny_890989@hotmail.com)

Faculty

Faculty of Economics and Business (FEB)
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS)

Name of Conference

The 5th International Conference on Postgraduate Education (ICEP-5/2012)

Date and Venue

18-19th December 2012

Dewan Sultan Iskandar

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia

Organizers

Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE)

Malaysian Deans of Graduate

Studies Council (MyDEGS)

Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM)

Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM)

Sponsor

Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE)

The 5th International Conference on Postgraduate Education (ICEP-5/2012) was held at Dewan Sultan Iskandar, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), Tuesday-Wednesday, 18-19th December 2012, organized by Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE), Malaysian Deans of Graduate Studies Council (MyDEGS), UTM and Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM), sponsored by Ministry of Higher Education (MoHE). The theme for ICEP-5/2012 is "Current and Future Trends in Postgraduate Education". The conference objectives are:

- As a partnership platform that can provide a good opportunity for management / administrators / school graduates, academics, students, and sponsors to assess the issues and challenges faced together.
- As a forum for the management / public administration to discuss and exchange ideas to enhance the university's ability to provide optimal infrastructure for graduate studies.
- As a platform for graduate students, in particular recipients Ministry of Higher Education / Public Service Department scholars gathered to build networks through presentation of research findings, discussion and feedback.
- Provide a platform for graduate students rally from universities include local students and foreign students studying in local universities.
- The findings and feedback from this conference can help universities and the Ministry of Higher Education in improving the existing policies as well as provide input in the planning and sustainable development of graduate studies towards making Malaysia a hub of excellence in higher education.

Moreover, another aim of this conference is to encourage all the students to graduate on time (GOT) in order to achieve the mission of 12th Malaysia Plan, that is, to produce 48,000 PhD holders by 2020 and 60,000 PhD holders by 2023 through the program of MyBrain15.

Apart from giving talk, forum and round table dialog from professionals, ICEP-5/2012 also took the opportunity to organize a postgraduate poster presentation with the aim to exchange and sharing of views and findings amongst postgraduate students. This poster presentation was categorized into four categories, namely, Science and Technology, Engineering, Social Science as well as Business and Economics. The ICEP-5/2012 received 190 posters in total from 21 universities in Malaysia. There were six prizes to be awarded to the winning posters in each category:

- 1st Prize: RM 1000.00
- 2nd Prize: RM 500.00
- 3rd Prize: RM 300.00
- 3 x Consolation Prizes: RM 100.00

Throughout the sessions in this conference, we have the opportunity to know the goals and challenges/issues faced by the graduate schools. Moreover, this conference had also enhanced our knowledge and provided more information especially the importance of promoting and upgrading postgraduate education in supporting Malaysia's mission in generating high quality and knowledgeable manpower. The highlighted sessions are as follow:

Session	Speaker(s)
MyBrain15 - Transforming Human Capital in Malaysia towards Vision 2020	Prof. Dr. Nik Maheran Nik Muhammad, Director, Centre of Corporate and Strategic Relations, Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK)
Briefing on MyBrain 15 by Ministry of Higher Education on Malaysia (MoHE) to conference participants	Mr. Suharni Ismail, Scholarship Division, Ministry of Higher Education, MoHE
Preparing Graduate Students for the Global Workforce	Prof. Dr. Paul K. H. Tam, Prof VC and VP for Research and Dean Graduate School, The University of Hong Kong
Graduate On Time (GOT) Dialog for students 'Graduate-On-Time: What it Takes?' 'Managing Our Lives As Graduate Student' 'Student-Supervisor Relationship'	Prof. Dr. Ahmad Fauzi Ismail, Faculty of Chemical Engineering, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM) Johor Bahru Dr. Mustafa Man, Faculty of Science & Technology, Universiti Malaysia Terengganu

Furthermore, this conference has shed a new light for our studies as well as future career development. Not only that, ICEP-5/2012 also gave us valuable experiences where we were given chances to meet and interacted with a number of academicians and students from different parts of the Malaysia. Hence, we believed that the objectives of ICEP-5/2012 have been achieved successfully.

As for our achievement, four of us had won four out of six prizes in the category of Business and Economics. The awards were:

1st Prize: Shirly Siew-Ling Wong
Research Title: Constructing a Novel Business Cycle Indicator for the Malaysian Economy

3rd Prize: Lee-Chea Hiew
Research Title: The Role of Advertising Expenditure in Money Demand Function for China

Consolation Prize: Alvina Syn-YeeLee
Research Title: External Debt and Macroeconomics Indicators: Evidence From Malaysia

Consolation Prize: Jenny LijooYong
Research Title: Exchange Market Pressure: Evidence from Malaysia

Lastly, we would like to convey our appreciation to the organizers (MoHE, MyDEGS, UTM, and UTHM), MyBRAIN15, UNIMAS, Centre of Graduate Studies of UNIMAS, FEB and our supervisory committees for their financial and moral support.

Winners for the Category of Economics and Business



First row from left to right:
Boey Huey Ming (MMU, Malacca); Ooi Zheng Kai (MMU, Malacca).
Second row from left to right:
Shirly Siew-Ling Wong (UNIMAS), Alvina Syn-YeeLee (UNIMAS); Lee-Chea Hiew (UNIMAS); Jenny LijooYong (UNIMAS).

Winners from Faculty of Economics and Business, UNIMAS



First row from left to right:
Alvina Syn-YeeLee and Jenny LijooYong.
Second row from left to right:
Shirly Siew-Ling Wong and Lee-Chea Hiew.

Joint Field Course: An Interesting Yet Rewarding Experience in the SLUSE-M Master Programme

Written by:
Dr Wong Swee Kiong
SLUSE-M Master Programme Coordinator
Faculty of Social Science

SLUSE-M (Sustainable Land Use and Natural Resource Management in Malaysia) Master Programme is a unique interdisciplinary master programme offered in UNIMAS. Students who have enrolled into the programme will be awarded either a Master of Environmental Management (Development Planning) or Master of Environmental Science (Land Use and Water Resource Management) upon successful completion of their studies in the programme.

UNIMAS has a very close collaboration with the universities in Denmark. Every year, a group of SLUSE students from Denmark will come to Malaysia to join with our SLUSE master students from UNIMAS to go to the field to have the Joint Field Course. This year (2012), there are 27 students from Universiti Malaysia Sarawak (UNIMAS) and 36 students from Copenhagen University and Roskilde University in Denmark participating in the Joint Field Course held in the five selected villages in Sri Aman from 3-13 March 2012. During the whole joint field course duration, the students were exposed to many hand-on learning experiences besides being supervised by their lecturers both from UNIMAS and from Denmark universities.

Various activities had been carried out during this Joint Field Course period. The Malaysian students together with Danish students were staying in the selected villages for 11 days to study the livelihood strategies of the people in the villages. The students had sometimes also gone to the paddy field, rubber estate, oil palm estate, and nearby forest or the villagers' farms to see how those crops are cultivated besides getting the soil sample, water sample, as well as carrying out vegetation and animal sampling in the nearby forest. The soil sample is collected to analyze the fertility of the soil in a particular area. On the other hand, water sample was collected to find out the quality of water available in a particular area to determine if the water is safe for consumption or otherwise. The stock of flora and fauna in the forest is identified to see the availability of the resources in the selected area, and to determine how villagers depend on these resources for their livelihoods. Sometimes, the students would also go to the nearby waterfall to experience the nature besides trying to feel what the villagers in those selected areas have been experiencing every day.

After spending about three days in the respective village, all the students who were placed in the five respective villages would come out from the village and present their research proposal in Sri Aman Civic Centre. Later, this group of students would go back to their designated villages to continue with their study. They would later present their findings in front of the village headmen and community leaders/ heads. Before they present their final findings, some students had also visited the relevant agencies or departments to interview the officers-in-charge to gather more information for their research.

Before they left the villages, a farewell party would normally be organized by the students together with the villagers. This is often happy hours when the students together with the villagers would enjoy in singing and dancing and sharing their experiences with each other. However, before the students left the village on the last day of their field trip, it was normally a very sentimental moment where there were a lot of tears seen on the faces of the villagers as well as the students. Of course, it is sad when the students need to leave the villagers after the close rapport and friendship had been built or established after 11-day of stay in the village. Wah! what a rich, interesting and rewarding experience to participate in the joint field course of SLUSE-M master programme.



Photo 1: Students are welcomed by the villagers during the welcoming session the moment they reach the village during the Joint Field Course Period



Photo 2: Students are ready with all the necessary equipments to go for soil sampling



Photo 3: Students taking water sample during the Joint Field Course Period



Photo 4: Students presentation attended by the village headmen and community leaders

Site Visit to Bengoh Dam 11 & 12 March 2013



Photos during Site Visit



Presentation



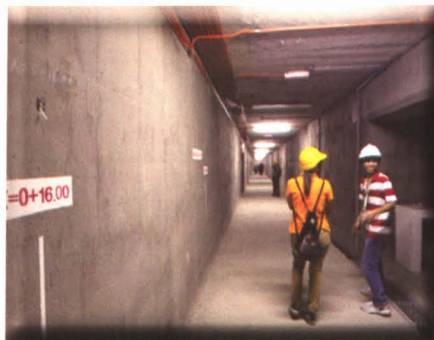
Upstream-side of dam



Dam top



Downstream-side of dam



Dam gallery



A site visit was organized to Bengoh Dam. It involved students from three courses, namely:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| KNS4193 Water Resources Engineering | - B.Eng. 4th Year Core Course |
| KNS4393 Hydraulic Structures | - B.Eng. 4th Year Elective Course |
| KNS6313 River Engineering | - M.Eng. (Civil) Core Course |

About 121 students and 11 staff participated in the site visit. Because of the sheer number of participants, the site visit was separated into two trips, which were carried out on 11 & 12 March 2013 (Monday and Tuesday).

It was part of the curriculum of KNS4193 Water Resources Engineering, where a chapter was dedicated to reservoir management. KNS4393 Hydraulic Structures dealt with structures of the dam like dam gallery that uncommon to sight to the public at large. Dam is covered as a manmade riverine structure in KNS6313 River Engineering.

At the time of visit (March 2013), the dam is almost completed except for the plugging and some M&E works. Impoundment is yet to be carried out. Because of this, the students were able to see the upstream and downstream ends of the dam body. This was particularly beneficial to the students taking KNS4393 Hydraulic Structures to be exposed and explained on the composition of the dam body that otherwise would be submerged in water in near future.

Prepared by

Dr Darrien Mah Yau Seng
Lecturer
Department of Civil Engineering
Faculty of Engineering
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SARAWAK

When my colleague told me that her PhD student was publishing prolifically during his candidature, I was intrigued by his secrets of success. Read on and find out about Bolu Oshodi, a PhD student under the supervision of Dr Shanthi Nadarajan at the Centre for Language Studies.

Q: How did you manage to write 14 papers and one book in three years

Bolu Oshodi: Three words: look, listen and learn. First, I look around to see things happening. Then I listen to what seniors, experienced colleagues and my supervisor are saying. Finally, I learn. I devote extra time to study what they have done and I tell myself "I want to do it". I also reminded myself, "you cannot be lazy and find an easy way out". There is one particular paper which took three good years to be published. I started writing the paper in 2010 when I first began my Ph.D. It was finally published this year, in 2013. I had to revise the paper five times and I had almost given up but I told myself "no". I needed to be tolerant because I took extra time to correct my work. All my papers are peer-reviewed and I don't pay to publish in journals. As regards the book, I'm planning to publish a second edition by June and I hope UNIMAS Publication would accept to publish it for me.

Q: Were there any cultural differences you encountered?

Bolu Oshodi: The way people here relate to foreigners is different from how people in my country do it. In my country, people want to befriend foreigners and make them feel at home. Here I find that people find it difficult to get close. Later, when I realized that it is a cultural difference, I adjusted.

Q: Was your Masters research on the same research area as your Ph.D?

Bolu Oshodi: My first degree and Masters degrees were on pure syntax. I have always been a pure theoretician. In my country, we don't go for SLA (Second Language Acquisition). When I came to Malaysia and met my supervisor, I discovered that my background in core linguistics and sociolinguistics can be blended together with applied linguistics. My supervisor has introduced me to new ideas which are very different from what I had been doing. First, she gave me papers to review. Then I realised that if I am to study the structure of a group of endangered Nigerian languages in Malaysia, I am not going to contribute anything to Linguistics in Malaysia. Now I am working on acquisition of morphology and syntax by speakers of a small language in Nigeria. My Ph.D research is on the source of the misuse of inflectional morphemes by L2 learners which is a universal phenomenon. I looked at previous studies and discovered gaps in knowledge. Established researchers like Lynn Eubank, Maria-Luise Beck, Lydia White, Philippe Prevost, Donna Lardiere and Roumyana Slabakova are still working relentlessly to account for the cause of morphological variability among L2 learners. My study will make a significant contribution to the field because I examined two core and controversial issues; I tried to account for the likely cause of morphological variability among L2 learners through a new hypothesis and I also try to see the role of Universal Grammar in the acquisition of L2 morphology. I blended many things together. Now my Ph.D is 65% core linguistics and 35% second language acquisition.

Look, listen and learn

Interview by
Associate Professor Dr Ting Su Hie

Q: You were a lecturer in your university in Nigeria for a number of years before you came here for a Ph.D? How do you take criticism of other lecturers here?

Bolu Oshodi: My supervisor is my biggest critic and my greatest motivator; she's also my best HOST. She doesn't take anything less than the best. When I do well, she says "this is good. You have improved" but when I don't do well, she criticizes me. All her criticisms have been very helpful. Life is about learning. Nobody is a highland. When I see somebody more experienced, I watch and learn. I see myself as a student when I'm here. I don't see myself as a lecturer. I hope to give a talk on handling criticism before I leave my course so that people will not see criticism as something negative. Put it this way, if your work does not get criticized, you can't move forward. We present our work at conferences so that the audience can criticize it. I've gained a lot each time my supervisor criticized my work. When she gives me two names to read up on, I'd go to the library and look for five because she wants me to convince her that I know what I'm doing.

Q: What are your general impressions about UNIMAS?

UNIMAS is a wonderful place and everything is great. However, I think some things need to be looked into. The school clinic in my opinion should be opened 24 hours because students are kept on campus (hostel) for 24 hours we have seen situations where student had to be rushed to Kuching in the middle of the night, this should not be the case. The clinic should be there to offer first aid treatment. Also, the activities and behaviour of students in the LIBRARY need to be monitored. Most students, particularly undergraduate students go the library to disturb others by playing music or discussing in loud voices in reading areas. There should be a thorough orientation through which students would be given the rules guiding the use of the library and violators should be seriously dealt with.



Bolu Oshodi's hopes

By God's grace, I would finish my Ph.D this year and go back to my university in Nigeria since the school sent me here. I'd also like to see more diversification of specialization in linguistics in CLS. So far, I see a lot of focus on applied linguistics. Core linguistics and sociolinguistics should be given a little more priority so that this can attract people from other areas of linguistics. Finally, I'd love to come back to UNIMAS one day either as a visiting lecturer or a Post-Doctoral Researcher.

List of papers

Adewale, R. K., & Oshodi, B. (In Press). Language endangerment in Nigeria: Focus on small ethnolinguistic communities in Niger State. *Dialectologia: Revista Electronica Barcelona*.

Olumuyiwa, T., & Oshodi, B. (2012). On the linguistic situation in Akoko. *California Linguistics, Linguistics online*, xxxvii.

Oshodi, B. (In Press). An evaluation of the HTS (High Tone Syllable) structure in Arigidi. *Ruwaza Africa: A Journal of Contemporary Discourse in Language and Literature*.

Oshodi, B. (2010). Atọka Asiko ati Iba-ṣeṣe ninu Ede Arigidi. *Inquiry in African Languages and Literatures*, 7, 1-9.

Oshodi, B. (2011). A comparative study of the phonological features of Arigidi and Standard Yorùbá: Implication for language classification. *Akungba Journal of Languages and Literature*, 3, 68-76.

Oshodi, B. (In Press). A cross-language study of the speech sounds in Yorùbá and Malay: Implications for second language acquisition. *Issues in Language Studies*, 2(1).



Oshodi, B. (2011). A reference grammar of Arigidi. Akure Nigeria: Montem Paperbacks.

Oshodi, B. (2012). Assessing the so called marked inflectional features of the varieties of English in L2 contexts: A Second Language Acquisition theory account. Paper presented at the International Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities, December 12-13 Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, Bangi, Selangor, Malaysia.

Oshodi, B. (2012). Assessing the universal factors of language endangerment focus on Nigeria and Malaysia: Can the indigenous languages survive? Paper presented at the Seminar Hasil Penyelidikan, Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi. November 8-9, Akademi Kepimpinan Pengajian Tinggi (AKEPT) Lebuhr Enstek, Bandar Enstek, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia.

Oshodi, B. (2010, November 23-24). Minority languages as underdogs in multilingual Settings: The case of Arigidi in South-West Nigeria. Paper presented at the International Conference on Majority and Minority; Language, Culture and Identity, Kuching, Sarawak, Malaysia.

Oshodi, B. (2012, July 9-10). Parameter resetting versus feature reassembly: Another look into the concept of morphological variability among L2 Learners. Paper presented at the Postgraduate Conference on Social Sciences and Humanities, Faculty of Economics and Business, Universiti Malaysia Sarawak, Kota Samarahan, Sarawak.

Oshodi, B. (2011, October 8-9). Perspective on language acquisition and code-mixing among Yoruba-English bilinguals: Why the Mixing will always hinder the acquisition. Paper presented at the Free Linguistics Conference, Eastern Avenue, University of Sydney Australia.

Oshodi, B. (2012, September 18-21). The Arigidi cluster: An internal re-classification. Paper presented at the International Conference Towards Proto-Niger-Congo Comparison and Reconstruction. *Langage Langues et Cultures d'Afrique Noire*, Paris, France.

Oshodi, B. (2012). The sociolinguistics of borrowing: The impact of Yorùbá on Arigidi. *California Linguistics, Linguistics online*, xxxvii.

Oshodi, B. (In Press). The HTS (High Tone Syllable) in Arigidi: An introduction. *Nordic Journal of African Studies*, 20(4): 263-275.



Bolu Oshodi with his supervisor, Dr. Shanani Nadarajan at the Centre for Language Studies.

Writing a thesis is like living in a zombie apocalypse. If you do it right, you can survive, but if you don't, I will be slicing your head with a samurai sword. So for those who want to survive, keep on reading this article.

Before you even start doing anything, prepare yourself with knowledge about zombies, I mean your subject. Learn your subject through reading, like scrutinizing zombies behavior; how they move and what they eat. Problem statements are like zombie's movement which is different from one movie to another and theories are like zombie's food which is similar in all movies, that is human flesh. Theories are best learned from books while journals can give you the idea for problem statements which must be clearly written that they can distinguish your works from existing research. Then, choose any weapon that suits you, be it a shotgun (LaTeX) or crossbow (Microsoft Words) for this will determine how fast you can act. Remember that pencil (machete) is always helpful. Whenever you find something important, highlight them, or if you have the idea while reading your references, write them down. Believe me, you just can't remember everything!

The next step is to find a group of people who can exchange ideas with you. A 'sheriff' would be a great asset to inspect your writing, that is someone who can criticize or question the content so that it won't get you killed. Besides, having a 'doctor' to read your thesis would help you heal your grammatical wounds. Well of course you couldn't get this step done before you start your writing as zombie disease has already spreading. You will have to find these people in your pursuit of survival.

To start writing is the most difficult part. It's like finding the courage to go down the street to look for food while the undead walk and feed themselves. Like it or not, it's a do or die. If you simply don't know what to do first because you never took zombies seriously, let me tell you how you can crank up your courage. Knowing what to do in terms of planning and detail strategies will boost your confident to get out. Write down your title and plan an outline which is the chapters and sub-chapters. You can fill in the Methodology, Results and Discussion chapters when you have already been doing your experimental works. For Literature Review, the sub-chapters can be constructed by dividing the theories that you have known into several parts so that they will bring the reader to your problem statements and the sub-chapters in Results and Discussion can be rearranged as to respond to your problem statements.

WRITE YOUR LIFE OUT!

by Ibrahim Yakub and
Norsuzailina Mohamed Sutan
(For all the fans of the Zombies
TV series and movies who
happen to be in the beginning of
their thesis writing journey)

One thing you should know about the title and the plan is that they are dynamic, like your strategies living in a zombie-land. You can always change the plan whenever necessary in accord to the current atmosphere of your research niche. Don't worry, we have Plan A, B until Z for zombies, right? What important is that you have them written before your eyes because that will give you hints on what you should look for to complete the mission, I mean thesis.

A plan in your head, gun in one hand and courage in the other, are all it takes to get started. Writing down sentences is like killing the hordes of zombies that are on your way to wherever you want to go. Don't rush nor go too slow if you don't want to waste your energy or even get caught by those heinous creatures. Initially, construct the sentence the way you understand it, then you can remedy it later in the way the reader can understand it. Note that you have to hit the zombie right at the forehead, or just get rid of the head. Don't get too creative in killing those zombies, like amputating their legs or hands, or even put fire on them as it would end up a sad story for you. Keep the sentences informative but simple.

There will be times when you get stuck to find the accurate word that implies what you are trying to say. When you realize this is happening (usually after a couple of minutes), just write the word in your mother tongue language and underline it so you can change it later. Don't waste too much time looking for the words as this is as dangerous as getting into close-hand combat with a zombie, or two, or more!

See, you have written one to two pages inclusive of the headings and spacing. That's good enough for a starter. If you still got that momentum, go for it, but if you don't, it's time for a break! However, you must be able to distinguish between feeling exhausted and simply giving up. If the second is the reason, you might need to restart back after 5 minutes rest because it means that your mission has not yet been accomplished but too many zombies have pulled back your guts.

Take a deep breath, think of something nice as the nightmare has not yet ended. If that does not work, think of the consequence of not able to complete your thesis, like getting those corpses chewing your flesh or worse, not graduating. By then, you should know your ability and you can estimate how many hours a day you should spend on your writing to complete it in time.

When you find new information you think is related to your work, don't jump to a conclusion that is based on that info alone. Many people won't realize they are doing this especially when the info comes from reliable sources and is currently released. Dig some more as assumption would just get you killed, literally. Assuming that your bitten mom or dad will dream again is just too risky without proper proofing and justification. Be reminded that every decision you made must be strongly justified.

Ok, you have read so many things about your subject and you are confident that there is nothing you don't know, but that does not mean you have to write everything in the thesis. Just pick up the necessities from the street so you won't burden yourself, or the reader. And at this point you might be asking yourself. "What if this is incomplete?" There are 2 common causes to this; you did not explain (what, when, how, etc) the information introduced; or you did not relate the information used with the other information in the thesis. So, read your writing over and over again for you to be aware of what it needs.

Eventually, the problem left is how to make sure the reader can understand what you have written. Above all, you must know who are going to read your thesis and imagine them reading it. They can be anyone, from the governor to the watch guards and the citizen, but of course the former is the most important person as verdict is in his hands. If you wrote it wrong, you could put war in place. That's where a sheriff and a doctor come in handy. After one or two completed chapters, have them read it and see if they can comprehend your writing by asking them several questions based on what you want them to understand.

Now that you have completed your first draft, go celebrate or at least give yourself a pat on the shoulder. But don't let your guard down because the norm is that it's not over until it is announced that it's over. Remember Amy and Sophia? The same thing happened to Lori the very moment she thought everything will be fine. Keep your ammo dry and blades sharp for a major correction of your first draft which is analogous to a sudden attack of a herd of zombies. Take it as a challenge or a test to your determination to survive. Last but not least, reading this article would not make you Rick Grimes or Project Alice, but a lot of readings and writings are. Now go down the street and kill some zombies will ya!

Welcoming New Staff

The management of CGS would like to take this opportunity to welcome the following staff:



STAFF CORNER

Birthday Wishes



APRIL



MAC



Farewell

Thank you to the following staff who have left CGS, for their contributions and services given while at CGS & wish them the best in their career & future endeavors



Dayang Mazina bt Awang Batu
Assistant Registrar
(CGS: 03 May 2011 - 31 March 2013)

Joined Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts
01 April 2013



Adeline Ann Lubi
Assistant Administrative Officer
(CGS: 15 November 2006 - 31 March 2013)

Joined Institute of Design & Innovation
01 April 2013

February



HAPPY

B - Be yourself;

I - Invite new challenges;

R - Remember your achievements;

T - Trust your decisions;

H - Have faith in your abilities;

D - Disire only the best;

A - Affirm your superiority;

Y - You've got what it takes!

SNAPSHOTS

of activities at the Centre for
Graduate Studies



Student's Registration



Central Teaching



ZSU Scholarship's Interview Session



Welcoming New Graduate Student



ZSU Scholarship's Recipients 2012/2013



Education Fair



BB1M Receipts



5'S Project





Planning for your
Master or PhD?
We will help you
to go further.



www.postgrad.unimas.my